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Center sponsors letters about literature contest

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Montana Committee for the Humanities

An Affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities

Oct. 31, 2001

Contact: Kim Anderson, Montana Committee for the Humanities, (800) 624-6001,
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CENTER SPONSORS LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE CONTEST

MISSOULA—

For some it's J.K. Rowling and the fantasy world of Harry Potter. For others it's Anne Frank, whose diary recounts her family's last months of hiding from Hitler's Nazis during World War II. Every day, writers and their works touch young people's lives.

For the third year, the Montana Committee for the Humanities' Center for the Book is sponsoring the Letters About Literature contest, a national program of the Library of Congress Center for the Book and the Weekly Reader Corp. The contest invites students to write a letter to an author – living or dead – explaining how the author's book "gave them wings" and changed their way of viewing the world and themselves.

"Letters About Literature is a wonderful contest, rewarding students for reading and writing well," said MCH director Mark Sherouse. "MCH and the Montana Center for the Book are delighted to sponsor the program again this year."

The contest has two divisions, one for grades 4-7 and the other for grades 8-12. MCH will award cash prizes ranging from \$50 to \$200 to the state's top three letter writers in each division. In addition, all entries will be entered in the national contest, where they will be eligible to win a cash award of \$500.

Last year's Montana High School Division winner, Chance Schieffert of Big Timber,

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wrote to Wilson Rawls, author of "Where the Red Fern Grows," saying that the book "brought me back to my childhood and made me think of my family, memories and childhood dreams that I had to work so hard to make come true."

Contest rules, application forms, guidelines, hints and sample winning essays from past years are available on the Library of Congress Center for the Book Web site – www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/letters.html – where they can be downloaded and printed. These materials also are available from MCH. Contact Kim Anderson, Montana Committee for the Humanities/Montana Center for the Book, 311 Brantly Hall, The University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812. She can be reached by calling (800) 624-6001 or e-mailing kanders@selway.umt.edu.

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